

If more concentration of ownership is allowed in media I am concerned that there will be fewer independent opinions heard on issues of local and national importance. There are many public issues that deserve thoughtful discussion before decisions are made. Larger and larger media companies do not appear to me to be the answer that the public needs to foster better answers to public problems. Large companies, like Clear Channel, try to cut costs to improve profits. In the process information and artistic content becomes homogenized. Staff is reduced. With fewer staff members there are fewer reporters to track down the facts, fewer writers and editors to analyze the facts, fewer people to question the analyses before they are broadcast or published. If the reporters, editors, and broadcasters of the reduced corporate staffs live outside of the regions where the news stories occur they may not know enough about local conditions to ask the right questions.

I think more complete public discussion is necessary before any changes are made in media rules. The public needs to know all the facts and all of the proposed changes, and have meaningful opportunities to respond, before any decisions are made. Let us keep and enforce the present rules until there has been a proper public discussion, with full public availability of and access to the information on this issue. If you consider rule changes necessary, publish the proposed changes with supporting reasons, including the full information used by you to reach your conclusions, then let the public and our elected representatives consider, discuss, and render opinions before any decision is made to put the changes into effect.